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New York

President:	Mr. Somavía	(Chile)
Members:	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Costa Rica	Mr. Carreras
	Egypt	Mr. Elaraby
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Cabral
	Japan	Mr. Owada
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Poland	Mr. Matuszewski
	Portugal	Mr. Soares
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Sweden	Mr. Dahlgren
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston
	United States of America	Mr. Richardson

Agenda

The situation in Sierra Leone

97-86182 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like, at the outset of the meeting, to acknowledge the presence at the Council table of the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, Mr. Rodrigo Carreras, to whom, on behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of October, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to Mr. Bill Richardson, Permanent Representative of the United States of America, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of September 1997. I am sure I speak for all members of the Security Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Richardson for the great diplomatic skill, good humour and imagination with which he conducted the Council's business last month. I should particularly like to emphasize the United States initiative to hold an open debate on Africa last month, which lends a political framework to our debate today.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Sierra Leone

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Nigeria and Sierra Leone, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Jonah (Sierra Leone) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Gambari (Nigeria) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/1997/777, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to the following documents: S/1997/776, letter dated 7 October 1997 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/1997/499, letter dated 27 June 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the text of the final communiqué issued at the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on the situation in Sierra Leone on 26 June 1997; S/1997/646, letter dated 15 August 1997 from the Chargé d'affaires *ad interim* of the Permanent Mission of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the text of the Declaration of the ECOWAS Committee of Four on Sierra Leone of 30 July 1997; and S/1997/695, letter dated 8 September 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the text of the final communiqué of the ECOWAS summit held in Abuja on 28 and 29 August 1997 and the decision on sanctions against the junta in Sierra Leone issued at the summit.

The first speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Sierra Leone, on whom I now call.

Mr. Jonah (Sierra Leone): It is a great pleasure for my delegation to see you, Mr. President, in the Chair. Chile and Sierra Leone enjoy very cordial relations, and I personally have known you for a number of years and have come to appreciate your diplomatic skill, tact and human qualities. It is therefore a pleasure for me to be here today.

May I also take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to the Permanent Representative of the United States for the way he conducted the Council's activities last month.

Let me also say that I want to thank all the members of the Security Council for agreeing that my delegation should participate in the Council's deliberations.

This is the first time I have had the privilege of addressing the Security Council. For over a quarter of a century, as a member of the United Nations Secretariat, I participated in the activities of the Council and witnessed how the Council wrestled with a number of acute international crises. I am therefore grateful that the Council should find the time to devote to consideration of the problem in Sierra Leone.

May I also take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the delegation of the United Kingdom. I know that the draft resolution before the Council was initiated under the presidency of the United Kingdom.

Sierra Leoneans are fully aware that in our history Queen Victoria often referred to Sierra Leone as "ancient and loyal Sierra Leone". Sierra Leoneans everywhere today understand and appreciate that the United Kingdom is today our loyal friend at this hour of crisis.

I do not think I should elaborate on the plight of the people of Sierra Leone. President Tejan Kabbah, on 1 October, gave a full explanation before the General Assembly of the crisis in my country since the *coup* d'état. In fact, we consider this meeting of the Security Council a response to his appeal that the world community should come to the rescue of Sierra Leone.

We have seen the draft resolution (S/1997/777). And may I also thank our African colleagues in the Security Council for what they have done to help make it possible for the Council to meet today. I must say quite frankly that the draft resolution, as it stands, far exceeds our expectations. We want to thank all of you.

Our concern is to what extent the military junta in Freetown will take seriously what will happen soon in the Council. The military junta has shown a high degree of recklessness in dealing with the international community. This may be due, perhaps, to the fact that since the *coup* d'état they have come under the spell of discredited politicians and so-called elder statesmen who have consistently misled them. For example, they have been told that the Security Council will reject the sanctions of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). They have been told that the Security Council will not call for the restoration of the legitimate Government of Sierra Leone. I hope when they read the draft resolution which the Council is about to adopt, perhaps they will see the reality. So our principal concern is that the junta should respect the institutional integrity of the Council.

The Council knows, as I think my President made very clear, that we are not very sanguine about talks. We have wasted over four months talking to the military junta and they have shown no inclination to agree to the restoration of the legitimate Government in Sierra Leone. We believe that the draft resolution before the Council, if it is adopted, will perhaps make a new beginning — a new reality — which will enable them to know that the world community is serious and wants the legitimate Government to be restored.

That is all I wish to say. Once more, I thank all those who have worked so laboriously in the past weeks and days. Let us hope that this draft resolution, when adopted — together with the talks which might start soon — will bring a new era in Sierra Leone, and one which, as President Kabbah said, is not one of recrimination, but of reconciliation. We know that many of the rebels, even though they have done tremendous harm to our country, are Sierra Leoneans. And we hope that the day will come when we will all walk together to build a strong and stable Sierra Leone.

May I end by saying that my delegation is in full agreement with the Secretary-General's statement that what we have today in Sierra Leone is a matter of very serious principle, in which a Government was elected by the people under the rule of law. We very much hope that the Security Council will not allow them to not only frustrate the will of the people of Sierra Leone, but to defy the world community.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Sierra Leone for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Nigeria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Gambari (Nigeria): It is a great honour to be invited to address the Security Council and a great pleasure to be here once again among friends.

Today we reach another important milestone in the fruitful cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States

(ECOWAS) in the efforts to resolve crisis situations in our subregion.

Since the outbreak of the current crisis in Sierra Leone following the violent overthrow of the Government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah on 25 May 1997, by a sector of the military in that country, the international community has been unanimous in its condemnation of the *coup* d'état. The United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and ECOWAS have all demanded that the junta step down so that the democratically elected Government in Sierra Leone can be restored without delay. We note with satisfaction that this position has not changed, and we urge earnestly that this principled position taken by the Security Council remain unchanged.

The initial round of talks between ECOWAS and the junta aimed at a peaceful resolution of the crisis was both encouraging and fruitful. However, the negotiations fell through during the next round due to deliberate stalling and acts of bad faith on the part of the junta, whose representatives reneged on the commitment which they had made earlier. Worse still, the regime announced its intention to remain in power for four years. The situation in Sierra Leone, which was bad enough at the inception of the *coup* d'état, has since then deteriorated considerably.

Members of the Council are by now well aware of the scorched-earth policy pursued by the junta in Sierra Leone. Although the ECOWAS Committee on Sierra Leone responded to further and often confused feelers from the other side to resume negotiations, those efforts are yet to materialize because of the continuing intransigence on the part of the junta. It is clear that the welfare of the people of Sierra Leone has no place in the mind of the junta.

Faced with this situation, ECOWAS was left with no option but to adopt a set of measures in the form of sanctions and embargo as a means of pressuring the regime in Freetown to appreciate the futility of its situation and agree to re-engage ECOWAS in a constructive dialogue which would ensure the early reinstatement of the legitimate Government of President Kabbah.

The decisions and actions taken by ECOWAS to resolve the Sierra Leonean crisis are guided by the following main considerations.

First, the situation in Sierra Leone is a clear threat to international peace and security, in view of its potential to destabilize the entire subregion.

Secondly, the subregion will want to avoid another costly and long drawn-out engagement, with the attendant massive humanitarian problems and tragedies, similar to what it experienced in Liberia.

Thirdly, while ECOWAS is sufficiently seized of the matter, the support and endorsement of the United Nations are needed. Both organizations have learned valuable lessons in Liberia which can be usefully applied to the resolution of this crisis. The message must be made very clear to the junta in Sierra Leone that it is completely isolated and its future is bleak.

As the draft resolution acknowledges, ECOWAS is the body closest to the situation on the ground. It also has a mechanism, in the form of its Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), already in place to carry out an effective monitoring and implementation of whatever measures are agreed upon. We therefore welcome the inclusion in paragraph 8 of this draft resolution of an enabling authorization of the Council to ECOMOG to carry out its tasks as mandated by the ECOWAS summit. We reiterate our strong appeal to all members of the international community to assist ECOMOG to carry out those tasks by providing it with logistical assistance and vital information, in addition to ensuring that there are no violations of the measures by any member State or entity.

Following the adoption of this draft resolution, and in fulfilment of the commitment made by my Foreign Minister, Chief Tom Ikimi, when he briefed Council members on 19 September 1997, the ECOWAS Committee on Sierra Leone intends to hold a meeting in Abuja on 9 and 10 October in order, among other things, to map out its strategy for resuming the stalled negotiations. In this regard, we hope that those who have leverage with the Koroma regime will bring it to bear so that its representatives will now come to the negotiating table in good faith and with a new commitment to the peaceful resolution of the crisis.

Finally, let me, on behalf of the Chairman of ECOWAS, General Sani Abacha, thank all members of this Council for their constructive approach to the consideration of this draft resolution. Of course, we in ECOWAS wanted additional and stronger measures included in the text. However, we regard this draft resolution as a positive development and we believe that what is important is that the message of the international resolve to restore constitutional order and peace in Sierra Leone be heard loud and clear by all concerned, especially the junta. In our view, the draft resolution

which the Council is about to adopt adequately conveys that unambiguous message.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Mahugu (Kenya): When the illegal military junta in Freetown forcefully and brutally deposed the democratically elected legal Government of President Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabbah on 25 May 1997, Kenya joined the rest of Africa and the world in unequivocally condemning that completely unacceptable act. This condemnation was emphatically stated by the thirty-third summit of the Organization of African Unity held in Harare, Zimbabwe, from 2 to 4 June 1997. We in the Council had already acted in a presidential statement and followed it with even stronger condemnation on 11 July 1997 and 6 August 1997.

Africa was saying, and the international community was supporting the clear statement, that military *coups* overthrowing democratically elected Governments were no longer going to be accepted. No equivocation, no compromise. As we speak today, no nation in the world has recognized this regime. In fact, more and more voices are being heard all over the world reaffirming over and over again this united stand against the illegal junta in Freetown. This illegal junta must not enjoy any kind of support. In this regard, Kenya appreciates and strongly supports the Secretary-General's position contained in his letter dated October 7 1997:

> "At stake is a great issue of principle, namely, that the efforts of the international community for democratic governance, grounded in the rule of law and respect for human rights, shall not be thwarted through illegal *coups*." [*S/1997/776*, p.2]

The superb efforts currently being exerted by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) through its Committee of Five — Nigeria, its Chairman, Ghana, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia — were initiated in good faith to try and negotiate a way for the illegal junta peacefully to relinquish power. These efforts have been focused and concerted. Above all, they have been conducted in good faith. The *coup* leaders said they wanted to talk but, because of their greed and duplicity, they have equivocated and sought to buy time in order to consolidate their illegal grip on power. They have been insincere and cynical. The illegal junta has even tried to divide the international community. We have stood firm and rejected its cynicism completely.

In a statement before the General Assembly yesterday, Kenya's Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Honourable Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka, recalled President Tejan Kabbah's appeal for help on October 1, 1997 at that very rostrum. Today, we voice the same plea and unequivocally support the timely regional initiative. As a country that has consistently employed regional initiatives to resolve regional problems, Kenya believes that the importance of this effort cannot be emphasized enough. This is African self-help, buttressed in a cooperative and solid manner by the international community. We are happy to note that this Council expresses its full support and appreciation for their mediation efforts.

ECOWAS cannot assist in the faithful implementation of this decision of the Security Council without solid financial help from the international community. The draft resolution therefore urges all States to provide it with technical and logistical support.

Looking ahead, we are confident that this draft resolution will be a useful tool for ECOWAS as it continues in its mediation efforts. When President Kabbah is reinstated in Freetown, we look forward to a speedy and faithful implementation of the Abidjan Agreement in a spirit of reconciliation and goodwill for all the people of Sierra Leone. On our part, we will continue to support this post-conflict peace-building effort with others, hopefully including the vehicle of a group of friends of Sierra Leone, in which we will be willing to participate.

Today, the international community, in reaffirming its commitment to democracy, will impose sanctions on the illegal junta. The sanctions come into effect immediately and will be lifted as soon as the junta relinquishes power and President Kabbah's democratic Government is back in its rightful place. They are targeted and, in our view, well calibrated, taking into important account the humanitarian considerations of the innocent civilians of Sierra Leone. We are obviously concerned about the added impact of these sanctions, but we believe that this is a necessary and well thought-out

push by the international community to dislodge the illegal junta in Freetown.

For all these reasons, Kenya will vote in favour of the draft resolution. We thank all those within this Council who have worked tirelessly in ensuring this outcome and call upon the entire international community faithfully to implement the decisions of this draft resolution. Our resolve is firm, our voice united and loud. The junta must go.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*interpretation from French*): The delegation of France will vote in favour of the draft resolution on Sierra Leone that is before the Security Council.

The draft expresses the support of the United Nations for the efforts of the members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to bring about, through negotiations, the peaceful restoration of constitutional order and the return of the democratically elected Government. Those efforts were recently outlined and explained to members of the Council by Ministers belonging to the ECOWAS Committee of Five Foreign Ministers. These regional initiatives, as the Secretary-General noted in his letter (S/1997/776) to the Council on this subject, are part of the efforts of the international community in favour of democracy grounded in the rule of law and respect for human rights. This endeavour deserves our support.

The member States of ECOWAS have told us that they have sought, and will continue to seek, to negotiate with those responsible for the *coup d'état* in Sierra Leone. The perpetrators of the *coup* have thus far refused to join negotiations in good faith, and consequently the States of the region have decided to exert pressure in the form of economic sanctions. These sanctions, as the Secretary-General also noted, should be seen as measures intended to promote a peaceful resolution of the crisis. They should not worsen the humanitarian situation of the people of Sierra Leone, already seriously affected by the ravages of the *coup d'état*. The Ministers of the ECOWAS Committee of Five have made it clear that they are very mindful of this requirement. It is important, in this context, that dialogue be established between their countries and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat regarding products and supplies that are exempted from the regional embargo, as well as the mechanisms for monitoring the humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone.

The draft resolution the Council is preparing to vote on provides for the imposition of sanctions. These measures have the same goal as the regional efforts, that is, the speedy restoration of democratic government and constitutional order. The sanctions were defined so as to limit the humanitarian effects on the population. They cover only the travel of members of the military junta and their families, as well as the supply of weapons and petroleum. There is provision for exemptions in particular for humanitarian purposes. It will be up to the Committee established by the resolution to ensure that these exemptions protect the people of the country from being seriously affected by the embargo.

The draft resolution authorizes ECOWAS to see to it that the embargo measures on arms and petroleum decided upon by the Council are strictly implemented with at Sierra Leone's borders. This provision reflects the relationship of trust that has been established between the United Nations and ECOWAS, a relationship forged by the successful cooperation in Liberia and reinforced by the efforts of the ECOWAS Ministers to explain to the members of the Council the thrust of their actions. This authorization is therefore exceptional in nature, but legitimized by the past experience of cooperation between the United Nations and ECOWAS. We place our trust, therefore, in the members of ECOWAS properly to discharge the mission entrusted to them.

The delegation of France hopes that democracy will soon be restored in Sierra Leone and that the sanctions decided upon by the Council can soon be lifted. The draft contains some fairly precise criteria for the lifting of the sanctions, and provides for a thorough review of the situation six months after their entry into force. These provisions make it possible to aim to avoid an indefinite extension of sanctions which could affect the lives of the peoples concerned. Periodic decisions by the Council on the continuation of sanctions would be the best way to achieve that goal, in the view of France, a view shared by many Member States of the United Nations.

Before I conclude, my delegation wishes to voice its concern with regard to the effects of the situation in Sierra Leone on neighbouring States. These States are taking in a very large number of refugees, and are doing so in accordance with traditional African hospitality. They do it without creating camps; they are generously opening their towns and their resources to these refugees. However, I repeat that this is causing serious economic consequences for neighbouring African States. It is right that under these conditions the United Nations and its Member States should wish to give support to these States, concrete support. The draft makes an appeal in

this respect, addressed to States and international organizations, as well as to financial institutions. We expect future reports from the Secretary-General on the implementation of the resolution to detail the extent to which this appeal to Member States and international financial institutions has been heeded. We earnestly hope to be able to confirm whether the concern about countries affected by the consequences of refugee flows have been translated into concrete assistance.

Before concluding, I would like, naturally, to express my congratulations to you, Mr. President, and, in particular, to thank last month's President for the excellent way in which the Security Council was able to discharge its responsibilities during the month of September.

Sir John Weston (United Kingdom): Some 19 months ago democratic elections were held in Sierra Leone and Ahmad Tejan Kabbah was elected President. Eight months later the Government of Sierra Leone under President Kabbah signed the Abidjan peace accord with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of Sierra Leone in Abidjan. The signing of this peace agreement signalled the end of five years of civil war and a chance for the people of Sierra Leone to look forward to a period of peace and stability in which much needed development could take root.

The United Nations, as a moral guarantor of the Abidjan accord, was actively engaged in the peace process. The Security Council was involved in exploring ways in which it could help assist the implementation of the accord. Tragically for the people of Sierra Leone, the peace process suffered a grave setback when the RUF refused to cooperate with United Nations proposals for a military observer force. In May 1997, a military *coup* was launched against President Kabbah's Government.

The United Kingdom, which had helped with the organization of the elections in March 1996, was appalled by this turn of events. We have joined the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the rest of the international community in condemning unequivocally the seizure of power by Major Koroma and his associates. The international community cannot afford to acquiesce in the arbitrary and unconstitutional overthrow of a democratic Government. And the people of Sierra Leone have the right to expect their Constitution, the rule of law and the results of free and fair elections to be respected.

The United Kingdom pays tribute to the dedicated efforts of the countries of ECOWAS, and in particular of the Committee of Five Foreign Ministers, to achieve a peaceful solution to this crisis. Unfortunately, their efforts to negotiate with the military junta to bring about a voluntary surrender of power have been thwarted by the junta's intransigence and lack of good faith.

Only two weeks ago, in this Chamber, many members of the Council, as well as the Chairman and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, drew particular attention to the importance of regional initiatives in dealing with the threats to peace and security in the region. The draft resolution before the Council today provides practical backing for ECOWAS.

By establishing an international arms and oil embargo, and visa restrictions on members of the junta, the Security Council will be making clear to the illegal regime in Freetown that the entire international community is committed to reversing the military *coup* and restoring the democratically elected Government. The draft resolution has our full support.

Mr. Matuszewski (Poland): The Security Council has long been engaged in monitoring and addressing the situation in Sierra Leone, harbouring both serious concern at the persistent lack of peace and stability in that country and hope at Sierra Leone's arduous progress towards constitutional democracy. The successful democratic elections held last year in Sierra Leone were welcomed by the Council as a milestone in the peaceful transition of that West African country to civilian rule. They were seen as a precious example of democracy prevailing over violence and strife in Africa.

Similarly, the Council recognized the great significance of the Abidjan Agreement, signed by the Government of Sierra Leone and by the Revolutionary United Front, not only for the prospects for national reconciliation and the reconstruction of the war-stricken country, but also as encouragement for the peace efforts in other parts of Africa. The conclusion of the peace accord appeared finally to put the country on the path towards recovery.

The military *coup* which earlier this year overthrew the democratically elected Government and the constitutional order in Sierra Leone came as a serious setback to the prospects for consolidation of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights in that country.

The Security Council, along with other representatives of the international community, including the Secretary-General, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Commonwealth, condemned the *coup* and strongly deplored the actions of the military junta which had illegally seized power in Sierra Leone. Deeply concerned at the aggravated crisis in Sierra Leone, which jeopardized security and stability in the whole region, the Council repeatedly called for the unconditional restoration of the democratically elected Government and the constitutional order in that country. The Council also supported determined regional efforts, especially those of ECOWAS, to achieve these goals. Unfortunately, so far these objectives have remained elusive.

In the face of the intransigent position of the military junta, which has refused to step down, bringing about further deterioration of the situation in the country, which has one of the world's lowest living standards, and threatening regional peace and security, the Polish delegation believes that the measures recommended by ECOWAS, which the Security Council would take by adopting the present draft resolution, are appropriate for the objective of the expeditious restoration of the democratically elected Government of Sierra Leone.

We support the sanctions to be introduced in response to the request of African States, although we are aware of the potential risks related to the use of such measures, especially with regard to their possible adverse effects on the humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone. In this context it is also essential that the proposed sanctions regime be equipped, *inter alia*, with a mechanism for humanitarian exemptions with regard to petroleum and petroleum products, subject to effective monitoring of delivery. It is also worth stressing that the measures envisioned in the draft resolution — including the comprehensive arms embargo, to which my delegation attaches the utmost importance — are strictly targeted on the military junta and its representatives.

In the context of the impact of sanctions on civilian population we wish to express our satisfaction that the ECOWAS Committee of Five has given the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs assurances that in implementing the current ECOWAS regional sanctions regime it does not intend to constrain humanitarian relief operations in Sierra Leone.

We believe that by adopting the draft resolution before us the Security Council will send a sufficiently strong message to the military junta to make it comply with the demand of the international community to relinquish power and allow for the restoration of democratic order in Sierra Leone.

The relevant paragraph of the draft resolution related to the enforcement of measures stipulated therein authorizes the regional organization — ECOWAS — to ensure strict implementation of Security Council decisions. It is our sincere hope that by creating such an enforcement mechanism this draft resolution will contribute to resolving the crisis in Sierra Leone and immediately terminating the plight of its people, thus preventing possible adverse implications for peace and stability in the whole region.

Accordingly, the Polish delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Park (Republic of Korea): The reversal of democracy in Sierra Leone last May has been a continuing source of grave concern to the international community. The Republic of Korea once again condemns the military *coup* in Sierra Leone, which overthrew the legitimate Government of President Kabbah. It has deprived the Sierra Leone people of their hard-won peace grounded in democracy and the rule of law. We are concerned about the future of Sierra Leone, in which the United Nations has invested heavily to help its people bring peace and democracy to the country. This unacceptable *coup* has had a very serious destabilizing impact on the whole region by reversing the new wave of democracy that is spreading across the African continent. It is also inflicting unbearable suffering upon innocent civilians. The humanitarian situation has drastically deteriorated since the *coup*, and the flow of refugees is placing an enormous burden upon neighbouring countries.

The international community has made persistent efforts to restore the legitimate Government of Sierra Leone. The Security Council has issued several presidential statements which strongly condemned the *coup* and demanded the immediate restoration of constitutional order. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has also intervened for this cause in cooperation with the United Nations. Unfortunately, however, the military junta has not only defied the repeated calls of the international community but has blatantly attempted to entrench itself in power. Given these circumstances, we believe that now the time has come for the international community to take more resolute action against the illegal regime.

In this regard, we welcome the regional initiative led by ECOWAS to bring maximum pressure to bear upon the junta with sanctions. In supporting that regional effort, we view it as essential that an unequivocal signal should be sent to the junta that the whole international community firmly stands behind the legitimate Government of Sierra Leone under the popularly elected President, Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabbah. We believe that imposing sanctions as provided for in the draft resolution before us is an inevitable choice to help restore the constitutional Government. My delegation also finds that the draft resolution is well targeted in the scope of its sanctions and is balanced as it allows humanitarian exemptions. We will therefore vote in its favour.

My delegation is of the view that the sanctions regime, once authorized by the Council, should be implemented in an effective manner. In this connection, we welcome the commitment of ECOWAS countries to assume responsibility for enforcement action under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. We have full confidence in ECOWAS and expect it to discharge the responsibility conferred upon it in a way that will contribute positively to the peaceful resolution of the Sierra Leone crisis.

As we all know well, sanctions are an instrument employed to help achieve specific political purposes. Therefore, we believe that the door for negotiation should remain open while pressure is exerted on the junta through sanctions.

We expect that ECOWAS will continue to coordinate closely with the legitimate Government of Sierra Leone and this Council to that end. We share the view that the Security Council and regional organizations should make a coordinated response to conflicts, a view that was advocated by many delegations at the special ministerial meeting held in this Chamber two weeks ago. In our view, ECOWAS should be commended in this regard, as it once again commits itself fully to resolution of the Sierra Leonean crisis, following the recent successful intervention in Liberia. It is our sincere hope that action we take today will set yet another example for the success of coordinated approaches between the Security Council and regional organizations in addressing conflict situations in Africa.

In concluding, we once again remind the junta in Sierra Leone that, in the interests of peace and democracy in their own country, they should agree immediately to the restoration of the legitimate Government. As is aptly put in the letter from the Secretary-General, strongly echoed by the Ambassador of Sierra Leone, what is at stake is the great cause of democracy, and we therefore believe that the international community should continue to stand as one in bringing home to the junta that there is no compromise on this principle.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): We associate ourselves with the words of congratulation addressed to you, Mr. President, on your assumption of this post, and I express my gratitude to the previous President.

The military *coup* of 25 May in Sierra Leone interrupted Sierra Leone's progress on the path to democratic development and derailed the peace process that had been established with such difficulty with the assistance of the countries of the region and the international community. A new threat has emerged to stability in that already troubled region.

The Russian Federation, given that its unacceptable to forcibly overthrow democratically elected Governments, decisively condemned the perpetrators of the *coup* and firmly supported the demand made by African States that constitutional order be restored.

We commend Africa's position of principle on this question and the efforts of the member countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) — in particular, the Committee of Five — to resolve the crisis in Sierra Leone. We are convinced that in order to attain that goal peaceful means should be used, first and foremost. Given the active involvement of ECOWAS in resolving the crisis in Sierra Leone, we attach particular importance to strengthening coordination between the Security Council and that subregional organization.

On the whole, our main premise is that cooperation between the United Nations and the regional organizations on questions relating to the maintenance of peace and security should be based on the Charter of the United Nations and that enforcement action should not be undertaken by regional organizations without the authorization of the Security Council. The draft resolution reaffirms the willingness of the international community actively to support the efforts of ECOWAS to reach a peaceful settlement of the crisis in Sierra Leone, *inter alia*, through negotiations with all parties. A clear signal is being sent to the perpetrators of the *coup* to the effect that they have no way out, that there can be no way out for them other than to relinquish power and take

immediate steps to restore the legitimate Government and constitutional order.

The powerful means of pressure on the junta brought into play by the Council — the embargo on the delivery of arms, military equipment, petroleum and petroleum products and visa restrictions on the leaders of the *coup* — have been fine-tuned and are aimed at specific targets. We are pleased that in this case the Security Council has taken additional precautionary measures to try to minimize any unintended side effects of the sanctions, in particular, any negative impact on the humanitarian situation. We also assume that member countries of ECOWAS, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the sanctions Committee will carefully monitor the situation in Sierra Leone and will regularly inform the Council of what impact the sanctions are having on the humanitarian situation there.

At the same time, we cannot hide our concern that the draft resolution does not establish a clear time-frame for the application of sanctions, although this was provided for in the document on the problem of sanctions which was approved by the consensus resolution on the Supplement to an Agenda for Peace at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly. This question is exceptionally important both for the effective impact on the conduct of parties targeted by the sanctions and for timely adjustments by the Council of measures it has adopted, in the light of the results achieved.

We are convinced that the point of sanctions is not to punish the party that has threatened international peace and security, but to change the conduct of that party. The logic and practice of indefinite sanctions regimes cannot, in principle, do that, and in our view they are counter-productive.

Nevertheless, given the careful review of sanctions in six months' time, as envisaged in the draft resolution, and in order to accommodate the wishes of African countries which have repeatedly stressed how much they want the speedy and unanimous adoption of a resolution, the Russian delegation is prepared, in this specific case, to be flexible and to support this draft resolution.

Mr. Carreras (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Mr. President, our delegation is particularly pleased that you are chairing the Security Council this month, and we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you once again and assure you that we will support your successful management of our proceedings.

In the broad context of the complicated general situation in Africa, the Security Council decided to devote special attention to the situation in the Republic of Sierra Leone, as part of the international community's effort over the past three years — through the United Nations, in coordination with the Organization of African Unity, subregional organizations and the Governments of the region — to restore pluralistic and representative democracy, and promote respect for human rights and peace and national reconciliation in that country.

This being so, the text before us today is not the result of improvisation, nor does it correspond to a vague and speculative position; rather, it is a clear demonstration of a well-defined and sustained commitment we have all made and resolutely keep, to the people of Sierra Leone to promote the unconditional and speedy return to democratic institutionality in that country.

The draft resolution we will soon be adopting also reflects an important conceptual development in the Security Council on the adoption of sanctions. In the case of Sierra Leone, the Council, in the opinion of Costa Rica, has taken the right course of action in defining a model of "intelligent" sanctions to penalize and exert pressure on the authorities of the junta and avoid greater humanitarian difficulties for the civilian population.

Our delegation feels that this new definition is an important signal and a timely confirmation the international community, identifying the responsibilities of those who from their positions of leadership cause situations that threaten international peace and security.

Costa Rica trusts that the community of nations, and this Council in particular, will adhere to this new political and legal definition and thereby avoid a recurrence of the kinds of situations that in the past have caused great harm to innocent people and made it even more difficult to reach objectives.

In this context, we should like to emphasize two elements in the draft resolution that we believe characterize this new vision. On one hand, on the premise that these sanctions are not an end in themselves, but rather a tool to achieve an objective, an initial 180-day period has been set for their application. Furthermore, they give the Sanctions Committee new scope for action by giving it important tasks aimed at ensuring the provision of humanitarian assistance.

In the case of Sierra Leone, as with other cases in Africa, we are particularly concerned by the humanitarian situation of the civilian population, especially the 100,000 displaced persons and refugees, whose conditions of health and nutrition are worsening daily. We are especially concerned about the child population, which is being affected by epidemics, and we wish to call particular attention to this. We trust that the international community, through its official channels and humanitarian organizations, will be able to attend to all of them. The report on this matter, submitted by the Secretary-General to the Council for consideration, demonstrates the growing gravity of the situation and constitutes an important appeal to Member States. Our delegation fully supports the efforts being made by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in coordination with concerned countries and subregional organizations to set up effective machinery to distribute humanitarian assistance.

In conclusion, as we said during the recent ministerial-level Security Council meeting on Africa, the crises in Africa are based on and supported by an unjust economic and social structure. The case of Sierra Leone is no different, and Costa Rica urges the international financial organizations to take a broad-based and comprehensive approach to promote reconstruction in that country, after the restoration of democracy, which we all desire.

In keeping with my comments here, Costa Rica will support the draft resolution before us and trusts that its implementation will contribute to the restoration, without delay, of the legitimate Government of President Kabbah, to whom we express our resolute support and admiration.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Costa Rica for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Dahlgren (Sweden): The serious situation in Sierra Leone is a matter of global concern in which the United Nations and the Security Council must take up their full responsibility. We could not agree more with the Secretary-General when he wrote to you, Mr. President, stating

> "At stake is a great issue of principle, namely, that the efforts of the international community for democratic governance, grounded in the rule of law and respect for human rights, shall not be thwarted through illegal *coups*." *(S/1997/776)*

Sweden strongly supports regional efforts, notably by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to peacefully restore the democratic order in Sierra Leone. When the region in unison has asked the Security Council to contribute to these efforts by increasing the pressure on the *coup* leaders, it has our full support.

We believe that efforts made jointly by the United Nations and ECOWAS will greatly enhance the possibility of achieving our common aim: that the military junta relinquish power and make way for the restoration of the democratically elected Government and a return to constitutional order in Sierra Leone.

By voting in favour of this draft resolution, Sweden wants to contribute to a solution by peaceful means, without the use of armed violence and without innocent civilians as victims.

Sanctions are an important instrument available to the Security Council. Using them means taking on a serious responsibility — a responsibility which Sweden does not take lightly. In particular, when dealing with economic sanctions great care must be taken to prevent innocent civilians from being made to suffer twice, first under an unlawful regime and then under international sanctions. The Council must always be guided by humanitarian considerations.

Appropriate measures have to be taken to allow humanitarian assistance to reach those in need. In the deliberations preceding today's decision, Sweden has been guided by these considerations. Sweden supports the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Owada (Japan): More than four months have passed since the democratically elected Government of Sierra Leone was overthrown by the junta led by Major Johnny Koroma, flagrantly violating the framework established in the Abidjan Agreement, and putting in jeopardy the peace process in Sierra Leone, which had been so assiduously worked out by the international community. Japan once again condemns this act. Japan expresses its grave concern about the threat to international peace and security in the region that this act of violence against the constitutional order has brought about, as well as about the violence and human rights violations committed against the civilian population and foreigners, the humanitarian consequences of the *coup* and the interference in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The junta has been persistently ignoring the

voice of the international community as reflected in the three statements that the President of the Security Council has issued since the *coup*. The junta is strongly urged to take immediate steps to relinquish power and to restore constitutional order in Sierra Leone.

I should like to reiterate Japan's support for the efforts of members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and other States of the region to resolve the crisis in Sierra Leone. In this context, I wish to express my Government's appreciation for the steadfast and tireless efforts of ECOWAS to engage the junta in dialogue and to search for a peaceful end to the crisis in Sierra Leone. I should also like to convey Japan's support for the mediation efforts of the United Nations, as well as for the endeavours of the Secretary-General's newly appointed Special Envoy, Mr. Francis Okelo. It is most regrettable that the junta has not responded with all the earnestness that is required to these calls for dialogue. Japan calls upon the military leaders to take upon themselves the responsibility for resolving the crisis and to participate in good faith in an effort to bring about a just resolution of the current abnormal situation.

Since the junta has been consistently turning a deaf ear to the voice of the international community, this Council is now obliged to address the situation by taking concrete measures, as provided for in the draft resolution before us. I wish to recall that the purpose of these measures is not to punish the junta for the sake of punishment. It is an attempt on the part of the Security Council to uphold the principles involved. The measures are intended as a means of prevailing upon the military regime to listen to the voice of the international community and to heed the calls of the Security Council to make way for the democratically elected Government of Sierra Leone and thereby restore the constitutional order in that country.

At the same time, Japan is acutely aware of the possibility that the sanctions restricting the sale and supply of petroleum and petroleum products may cause further hardship to the people of Sierra Leone. The draft resolution addresses this point in two ways: first, by requesting that appropriate exceptions be made for humanitarian reasons and, secondly, by calling upon ECOWAS, the various agencies of the United Nations and other organizations to endeavour to make appropriate arrangements for the delivery of humanitarian assistance. It is hoped that through the implementation of these provisions the negative impact of the sanctions on the civilian population will be kept to a minimum. We look forward to the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Sierra Leone and will be interested in its evaluation of the humanitarian conditions there.

In view of the elements that I have enumerated as being essential, Japan deems the contents of the draft resolution before us to be appropriate. Japan will therefore support this draft resolution. Japan will continue to follow closely developments in Sierra Leone.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The Security Council exercises today its responsibilities under the Charter to maintain international peace and security and to protect legitimacy. In November of last year the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) signed the Abidjan Peace Agreement, which ushered in a new stage in Sierra Leone, a stage of national reconciliation and accord that would have allowed the people of Sierra Leone to begin a new phase of development and peace.

Our hopes were subsequently bolstered by the presidential elections, the progress of which we monitored in the Security Council. The international community attested to the fairness and openness of these elections, which led to President Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabbah taking power. In this context, we should play tribute to the historic role played by Ambassador James Jonah personally in supervising the preparations for the restoration of the constitutional regime in Sierra Leone.

However, the military *coup* that took place last May, overthrowing the Government of President Kabbah and the constitutional regime, has turned the clock backwards. I am not going to go into detail regarding the grave human and social consequences. Everyone is aware of the profound effects of that setback on the people of Sierra Leone.

During the last summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity in Harare, Africa adopted a firm position vis-à-vis the *coup*. The African countries unanimously rejected and refused to recognize the illegal Government, condemned the *coup* and its leadership, and demanded that the international community adopt immediate measures to restore legitimacy as represented by the government of President Kabbah. The OAU also fully supported the efforts of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in that context.

This adoption of this unanimous position by the African countries undoubtedly represents an important turning point in the modern history of Africa. We are

satisfied that ECOWAS, represented by the five-member ministerial committee, adopted a pioneering approach, a gradual approach to deal with the crisis in Sierra Leone. It began with dialogue and proceeded to the taking of all possible measures to pressure the *coup* leaders to acquiesce to the will of the people of Sierra Leone and to the will of the international community, renounce power and allow for the return of the legitimate government which was democratically elected.

It is thus perfectly clear that there is a new, unanimous African position regarding military *coups* in the countries of the continent. This position should definitely be supported and bolstered by the United Nations.

The draft resolution before the Council today reflects the international will, and we hope that the leaders of the *coup* will understand the dimensions of that will and the seriousness of the international community's commitment to see it through. We hope they will use the opportunity of the ECOWAS meeting which starts tomorrow in Abuja to make a real and positive response to the proposals of the ministerial Committee of Five, with a view to finding a peaceful solution to this crisis.

The draft resolution also reflects a practical framework for cooperation which we hope will take place between the United Nations and the regional and subregional organizations in the context of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

In the course of negotiating the draft resolution diverging opinions and proposals were made regarding the time-frame for the enforcement of the measures contained in it. Egypt supports the concept of the time-frame for the present sanctions so that there will be the necessary flexibility to face various contingencies which require the imposition of sanctions. We hope the Council will review comprehensively the present sanctions system in general, taking into account what the General Assembly recently adopted in the context of an Agenda for Peace with respect to this issue. The Security Council should not act within a framework which differs from principles adopted by the General Assembly.

The Egyptian delegation is fully convinced that the ECOWAS countries will seriously consider the exemptions which guarantee delivery of material and supplies for humanitarian purposes to Sierra Leone. We hope that there will be close coordination between ECOWAS and the United Nations in this respect and that this coordination will be intensified with the various international humanitarian agencies so as to make humanitarian assistance available to the people of Sierra Leone in order to mitigate their suffering from the impact of these sanctions.

Egypt supports fully operative paragraph 18, which urges all States to provide technical and logistical support to help ECOWAS carry out its responsibilities in the implementation of this resolution. We hope there will be an effective international response to that appeal.

Finally, I reiterate the support of Egypt for the draft resolution.

Mr. Soares (Portugal): Portugal fully supports the objectives of the draft resolution before the Council. The measures contained in it seek to reverse the situation created by the illegal *coup* d'état in Sierra Leone and to bring about, by peaceful means, the restoration of democratic rule, constitutional order and respect for human rights.

Under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, which foresees the utilization of regional arrangements for the enforcement of Council decisions, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has been authorized to ensure the strict implementation of the provisions of the draft resolution that are referred to in operative paragraph 8.

It is our understanding that the draft resolution seeks the restoration of the democratically elected Government of Sierra Leone by peaceful means. Indeed, we understand these sanctions as a political tool designed to make the junta realize that its unlawful actions have not been received with indifference by the international community. These sanctions are tailored to penalize those who have consistently refused to abide by the rules of democracy. They are not addressed against the people of Sierra Leone, the very people we want to protect by adopting this draft resolution.

One aspect of the draft resolution we consider very important, and the inclusion of which we supported, is the need to establish appropriate mechanisms for the provision of humanitarian assistance and to ensure its safe delivery to the population for which it is intended.

We are very concerned about the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons, and the United Nations, with other relevant organizations, must continue to ensure the well-being of those affected by the crisis.

The crisis in Sierra Leone is, of course, worrying in itself on account of the usurpation of constitutional order. But it is also a destabilizing factor for the region, in particular for neighbouring countries, such as Liberia, where the still-fragile process of national reconciliation is trying to take hold.

The international community, through this draft resolution of the Security Council and through the activities of ECOWAS and other organizations, is demonstrating its willingness to help resolve the crisis in Sierra Leone by peaceful means. We urge the military junta to take heed of the will of the international community and respond positively by giving up its illegal claim to power. It should resume negotiations in good faith to make way for the return of democratic rule and constitutional order in Sierra Leone.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The current situation in Sierra Leone is not something the international community wishes to see. It has also inflicted enormous suffering on the people of Sierra Leone.

Since last May, the Security Council has on many occasions considered the question of Sierra Leone. It has issued three presidential statements and twice listened to briefings given by the Foreign Ministers of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). During this period, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and ECOWAS have made numerous mediation efforts.

Like other Council members, the Chinese delegation is concerned at the changes in the situation in Sierra Leone and feels deep sympathy for the sufferings experienced by the people of that country. We appreciate the mediation efforts of the United Nations, the OAU and especially ECOWAS, and we support them in their efforts to seek a peaceful means of resolving the problems in Sierra Leone.

China has always taken a cautious approach to sanctions. We hope that the measures contained in the draft resolution before us will be conducive to an early and peaceful settlement of the question of Sierra Leone and will not cause any humanitarian difficulties for its people. Based on these considerations, and acting out of respect for the African countries and their wish that an early settlement be found to the question of Sierra Leone, China will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Cabral (Guinea-Bissau) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation is pleased that we have in our midst today legitimate representatives of the Government of Sierra Leone — a Government that was elected democratically through a process, recognized and commended by us all, which was followed from beginning to end by the international community.

I will not go into the circumstances that prompted the Security Council today to discuss the question of Sierra Leone. I will limit myself to noting, along with other members of the Council, that on 25 May, that the democratic process in Sierra Leone was brutally interrupted following a *coup* d'état perpetrated by a military junta.

The international community did not hesitate for a minute. It mobilized to unambiguously condemn the *coup* and to demand the return of constitutional order and the unconditional restoration of the Government of President Kabbah.

The military junta has distinguished itself by atrocities that we condemn, by systematic human rights violations and by actions that run counter to the most basic human rights. That is why we are here today to express clearly our solidarity with the people of Sierra Leone and once again to reject any policy of *fait accompli*.

The Security Council has three times now made it clear in presidential statements that it rejects the exercise of political power by force. The Security Council pronounced itself in favour of the restoration of constitutional order to Sierra Leone and has consistently stated its readiness to consider appropriate measures to help to bring about a return of constitutional order to Sierra Leone.

Today we are asked to respond in practical terms to the appeal made to us by the people of Sierra Leone. That appeal is a distress call because 18 months ago, when the people of that country were for the first time asked freely to express themselves, they unanimously chose President Kabbah to lead their country and to preside over the destiny of their homeland.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU), at its thirty-third summit, held in Harare in June, solemnly condemned the *coup* d'état. It indicated that the era of *coups* d'état was long since over and that it was inadmissible for the military to decide to perpetrate them in order to claim the right to lead their country against

the wishes of the people, as expressed freely through the ballot box.

The Government of President Kabbah has distinguished itself by a democratic approach since its accession to power, to the extent that the President and his colleagues have striven to carry out a policy of national reconciliation that includes all the vital forces and the political parties of their country, with a view to creating a secure foundation for democracy and for the exercise of power by the people.

Unfortunately, all of those efforts were inconclusive. The Government of President Kabbah went to Abidjan, where an agreement was signed that acceded to certain claims of the opposition. That agreement was to constitute the political and juridical framework which was to enable the consolidation of democracy in Sierra Leone. The international community, through the President of the Security Council, welcomed that agreement, which gave rise to hopes that this was to be the start of a new era in Sierra Leone — an era of peace, national reconciliation and democracy. Unfortunately, the perpetrators of the *coup* destroyed the hopes of the people of Sierra Leone.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), in keeping with the spirit of solidarity of our peoples, spared no effort in helping to bring about a return to democracy in that fraternal country. Following the ministerial meeting held in Conakry on 26 June, the Committee of Four Foreign Ministers — Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria, and later Liberia — was set up to implement the decisions taken at that meeting through an ongoing search for ways and means to undertake negotiations with the putschists, because negotiations were never set aside during this process. I believe that we should stress here both the devotion and the determination of those five countries, which, as I said earlier, have spared no effort to negotiate a settlement that would be acceptable to all.

The Security Council twice — on 11 July and 19 September last — received a delegation led by the Foreign Ministers of Nigeria, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Liberia. They came not only to tell Council members of their concern at the seriousness of the crisis prevailing in Sierra Leone but also to remind the Security Council of its obligations stemming from the Charter, that is, our commitment to defend the principles that the Secretary-General reiterated in his letter dated 7 October addressed to the Council.

We feel that today's meeting responds to our need to contribute to a quest for peace through negotiations. However, the stubborn refusal of the military junta to relinquish power and to accept the restoration of constitutional order, notwithstanding the efforts of the international community and particularly of the mediation committee of ECOWAS, obliges us today once again to express strong condemnation and, we hope, to take steps that will be a clear response to that stubborn refusal.

The failure of the negotiations conducted at Abidjan on 29 July between the mediation committee and the junta proved once again that the members of the junta are not prepared to cooperate in good faith in establishing conditions that would permit the return to constitutional order, by which I mean the return of President Kabbah, a President democratically elected to the head of his country.

Today, having noted that stubborn refusal and in light of the evasiveness we have witnessed — and here we base ourselves on the summit communiqué of the ECOWAS heads of State held at Abuja on 28 and 29 August 1997 — our Council has decided to help in the subregional effort that is being made by ECOWAS once again to categorically reject any decision that would allow any illegal perpetuation of unconstitutional power following the *coup* d'état perpetrated by the putschists in May and to contribute, through firm and appropriate action, to a return to constitutional order in that country.

Given those considerations and the various discussions we have had in the Security Council on this subject, Guinea-Bissau finds this meeting today timely, necessary and wholly appropriate. The draft resolution before us both reflects our concerns and gives unambiguous expression to the will and determination we all feel to work to consolidate peace in Sierra Leone — through negotiations, certainly, but also through resolutions that will remind the junta that it must compromise and listen to reason.

The draft resolution we about to adopt will, we hope, be a clear expression of our resolve, and we hope that the military junta in Freetown will not interpret it as just another Security Council statement like those made here in the past. As we have said, it is an appeal to reason. It is an appeal for negotiations. It is an appeal for the return of the democratically elected Government of President Kabbah and for a return to the peace that the people of Sierra Leone so ardently desire.

It is of course with some reluctance that we adopt a draft resolution that imposes sanctions on Sierra Leone. We too, like some other members of the Council, are concerned about the possible humanitarian impact on an innocent population which, as I have said, is already experiencing the horrors of a power that has no respect for the most elementary humanitarian principles. I believe, however, that the people of Sierra Leone will agree with us as we try once again, through these sanctions, to lend assistance to them and that they will be prepared to accept these additional sacrifices, to the extent that the sanctions will, we hope, help to bring about a speedy return of peace and democracy.

I would like here to pay tribute to the African countries that are members of the ECOWAS mediation committee, who have been working tirelessly in this collective effort which the Security Council is asked to join today. I would like to thank them in particular for agreeing to receive, in the dignified manner traditional to Africa, hundreds of thousands of refugees at a time when we know that those countries, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and even Liberia, are facing socio-economic difficulties. I think that this is an expression of African solidarity, and it goes without saying that it will be up to the international community — as indeed the draft resolution we are about to adopt indicates — to lend every assistance in exercising this very African solidarity.

I should like to say that my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution because it is the expression of our condemnation of the military *coup* and the unambiguous expression of the rejection by the international community, and by the Security Council in particular, of *faits accomplis*. It represents our refusal to accept the fact that a military group can seize power by force and destroy a democratic process that was the free expression of the wishes of an entire people.

Mr. Richardson (United States of America): I would like to thank Council members for their kind words regarding the United States presidency during the month of September.

The United States strongly supports this draft resolution, which makes clear that the illegal military regime in Sierra Leone must step down.

The people of Sierra Leone have suffered greatly during six years of insurgency and domestic terrorism by the Revolutionary United Front. President Kabbah tried hard, with the assistance of the United Nations, to find a way to end this conflict and establish a Government which represented all the people of Sierra Leone in a fair, honest manner.

But in May the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council and the Revolutionary United Front seized power. At a stroke, they rejected the efforts of the citizens of Sierra Leone and of so many other nations of Africa to emerge from the debilitating cycle of rule by violence.

The people of Sierra Leone have refused to accept the regime of the junta. The United States admires their commitment to democracy just as it condemns the abuses of the junta, particularly its overthrow of an emerging democracy and its grave violations of human rights.

The United States, in voting for the draft resolution, joins with the citizens of Sierra Leone and with the other Council members to demand the immediate restoration of the democratically elected Government of President Kabbah. With this draft resolution, the Security Council makes clear its willingness to exercise the enforcement powers of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter in the service of this goal.

With this draft resolution, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter, the Security Council also joins in the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to try to resolve the crisis as ECOWAS successfully did for neighbouring Liberia. We commend the efforts of the ECOWAS Committee of Five — Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea and Liberia — as well as the work of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy to bring about a peaceful restoration of democracy.

The Security Council is voting today to support the ECOWAS plan of action for Sierra Leone with concrete measures: sanctions. The sanctions have been carefully targeted: prohibitions against the supply of arms and petroleum products, and restrictions on the travel of members of the junta and their families. The draft resolution calls upon all States to cooperate with these measures and authorizes ECOWAS, as necessary and in conformity with applicable international standards, to inspect incoming ships to ensure compliance.

The draft resolution does not limit shipments of food or medicines or other basic necessities. It contains provisions for regular review of the implementation and impact of the sanctions. The sanctions are designed to

have maximum impact against the illegal junta of Sierra Leone, while imposing a minimum burden on the civilian population.

Some members of the Council have argued that these sanctions should have an expiration date. An expiration date would require the Council to reapprove its sanctions down the road. It would cause doubt about the Council's future intentions. It would create uncertainty for suppliers and others about the possibility that sanctions would lapse. Most important, an expiration date in, say, six months would encourage the junta in Freetown to try to tough it out, in the hope that in six months and one day the world would have changed, so they would not have to.

The call by some Member States to accept less than full compliance in other sanctions regimes might even feed such a pernicious hope. It would be tragic if this led the junta to make the wrong decision. This is why the United States believes that compliance, and not the calendar, should govern the Council's approach.

The draft resolution makes clear how the junta can end these sanctions: by restoring the legitimate Government of Sierra Leone. ECOWAS and the Secretary-General's Special Envoy stand ready to mediate. The path is clear. Sierra Leone can return to the urgent task of national reconciliation and economic development. We call upon the military officers in Freetown to meet with the mediators this week in Abuja, to achieve a negotiated settlement, and to restore the constitutional order and the democratically elected Government.

This is why the United States strongly supports this draft resolution, which makes it clear that the illegal military regime in Sierra Leone must step down. And this is why this draft resolution imposes sanctions until they do.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Chile.

On 25 May there was a military coup that overthrew the democratically elected President of Sierra Leone. The international community was not slow to deplore and condemn that situation; it reacted simultaneously at the three levels that have recently characterized international action with regard to crises in Africa: the subregional level, through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); the regional level, through the Organization of African Unity (OAU); and the international level, through the United Nations Security Council.

It was initially at the regional and subregional levels that the decision to act was made. The Harare summit strongly condemned the military coup. The members of ECOWAS, for their part, took measures to reverse the situation, primarily using peaceful means to seek to achieve restoration of the democratically elected Government.

Unfortunately, the military junta did not even agree to sit down at the negotiating table, at an appropriate level, to bring about a peaceful transition to constitutional order. Accordingly, ECOWAS had to adopt measures at the end of August to make the junta understand the situation it was in. Now ECOWAS has asked, through its Committee of Five, that the Security Council support its actions.

The draft resolution before us, which was beginning to take shape, benefited from consultations held by the interested States, particularly the members of ECOWAS and the legitimate Government of Sierra Leone itself. There was great harmony in this action. The Council was able to intervene at the subregional and regional levels, to the benefit of all. I believe that the way in which this draft resolution was prepared is very important, as is its content, which all speakers have highlighted.

We should acknowledge that the ministerial meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Africa gave priority to the kind of relationship that should exist between the Council and the regional level.

We will adopt a draft resolution which was the subject of lengthy and intense consultations, due to the nature of the measures it includes. We have received valuable information from the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, which has indicated that the May coup has had a series of grave humanitarian consequences, which continue to this day. These include displacement of the population, deterioration of the health and food situation and collapse of basic services. Meanwhile, humanitarian needs continue to grow. The draft resolution aims to change this situation, by changing the structural humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone today.

It is important to emphasize that the Security Council is increasingly moving towards imposing sanctions on leaders, not on innocent populations. At the same time, this draft resolution contains the concept of

periodic review of the humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone, including the impact of sanctions.

It seems to us very important that the Secretariat of the United Nations continue to coordinate closely its activities with ECOWAS with regard to the humanitarian effect of these sanctions, as there is agreement that the United Nations should make recommendations to be applied in this matter.

The Security Council will adopt today a draft resolution designed to ensure that the military junta in Sierra Leone gives up power. We are taking every step possible to ensure that these measures do not cause unnecessary harm to innocent people, but we should not lose sight of our political objective, which is that the military junta in Sierra Leone leave power and permit the restoration of the democratically elected Government.

We hope that the members of the illegitimate junta realize that the international community is not prepared to accept coups. They should shoulder their responsibilities to the people of Sierra Leone, whom they have deprived of their legitimate Government and of regional solidarity and the international assistance necessary to move out from underdevelopment, something which is indispensable to that country.

In closing, I would like to quote what the Secretary-General said in his letter to the President of the Security Council when he explained the meaning of the action we are taking today:

> "At stake is a great issue of principle, namely, that the efforts of the international community for democratic governance, grounded in the rule of law and respect for human rights, shall not be thwarted through illegal coups." *(S/1997/776, p. 2)*

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1997/777.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

> Chile, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, France, Guinea-Bissau, Japan, Kenya, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1132 (1997).

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.